

## THE EFFECTIVENESS OF TEACHING LISTENING COMPREHENSION THROUGH ENGLISH SONGS AT ELEVENTH GRADE

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### Abstract

Tujuan penelitian ini adalah menganalisis efektivitas mengajar pemahaman mendengar melalui lagu berbahasa inggris dan menemukan masalah yang dihadapi siswa. Penelitian ini menggunakan *one-grup-pretest-posttest* desain. Sample penelitian ini adalah kelas XI. Data diambil melalui pre test, post test, perlakuan dan iterviu. Hasil menunjukan rata-rata nilai mean siswa dari post-test 65.3. lebih tinggi dari pretest 53.6, dengan peningkatan sebesar 10.5. Hasil t-test menunjukan signifikan  $p<05$ ,  $p=,000$ . Disamping itu, masalah yang dihadapi siswa yaitu: konsentrasi, memahami kata/frase, membedakan pola kalimat, penanda wacana, kecepatan berbicara dan panjangnya lagu. Namun, setelah berlatih, siswa secara bertahap mulai dapat memahami materi dan mampu mengatasi masalah. Dengan demikian, dapat disimpulkan bahwa: lagu berbahasa inggris dapat meningkatkan pemaham mendengar siswa dan mampu mengatasi masalah yang siswa hadapi selama belajar.

This aim of this research was to find out whether there is significant improvement of students' listening ability and to find out the problems faced by the students. This research used one-grup-pretest-posttest design. The sample was eleventh grade. The data were taken by pretest, posttest and interview. The result showed that students' mean score of posttest was 65.3. that was higher than pretest 53.6. with the gain 10.5. The test revealed that the result was significant  $p<05$ ,  $p=,000$ . Besides that, the problems faced in learning were students' low concentration, understanding the difficult words/phrases, distinguishing sentence pattern and discourse marker, unable keeping up with the speaker's speed and song materials were long. However, after practicing dialogues frequently, the students started comprehending the materials were able to overcome those problems. Therefore, it could be concluded that: English songs could improve the students' listening comprehension better and overcome the problems the students faced during treatment.

**Keywords:** listening ability, productive skill, receptive skill

## **INTRODUCTION**

English Curriculum 2006 (Depdiknas, 2006) states that senior high school students should master English both the productive skills and receptive skills to their level appropriately. The productive skills are speaking and writing and receptive skills are listening and reading. Since sound comes first to our brain, listening becomes the primary part of mastering the language. Listening has an important place in teaching-learning English in SMA because practically, people cannot speak without listening first.

Listening is the first language skill that the student should master because if they have good listening ability, they will understand what is being said or heard. But in fact, teacher cannot avoid the real condition of the students that they still have many difficulties in listening ability. It is supported by Harmer (1991:231) who states that teaching listening can cause some problems of the students. Moreover, Swift (2007:16) states that the students hate doing listening comprehension in the classroom. There are many reasons for the problem of students' listening ability, it can be caused from the students, the teacher, the material that given, technique, method, etc.

Furthermore, when the researcher did pre-observation in that school, it can be reported that the students' motivation in learning listening was low because most of the students cannot understand or comprehend what the speaker says. There are several ways to solve this problem and one of them is by using song.

It is generally known that students mostly have special interest in listening to English songs. It may be written for one or several voices and it is generally performed with instrumental accompaniment. Songs can also motivate a positive emotional influence on listener. It is noticed that students will often recite the words of the song while singing it; it makes the students unconsciously understand the content of the songs. It will eventually develop their active understanding of the songs. It makes students' ears accustomed to listen either to English song or dialogue or monologue.

According to Bramasto (2009), students' listening frequency of English songs correlates to their listening ability. He states that listening to English songs has a correlation with listening comprehension, as there is tendency that when the students' frequency in listening to English song is higher, their listening score is also higher.

Considering the statement, the researcher found out the effectiveness of English songs in teaching listening. The researcher interested in investigating the students' ability in listening. The researcher considers that there are some problems in students' interesting in listening there. The researcher did this research in order to help the teacher in solving this problems. In relation to the background, this research focuses on the following problem, namely:

1. Is there any significant improvement of students' listening ability after being taught through English songs?
2. What problem do the students face during teaching and learning process of listening by using English songs?

## METHODS

This quantitative research has two variables which are *teaching listening* as the dependent variable and *English songs* as the independent one. The researcher used one group pre test post test design. The research used two classes, one as the try-out class and another class as the experimental class. The students were given pre test, treatments, and a post test. The treatments of teaching listening comprehension through English songs were implemented three times. One group pre test post test design is represented as follows:

**T1 X T2**

(Setiyadi, 2006:143)

In collecting the data, the researcher used the following technique:

1. Administrating the Try-Out

The Try-out was administrated in the first meeting before Pre-test of teaching listening comprehension through English songs implemented in the experimental class, as the consideration of the pre-test items.

2. Administrating the Pre-test

The pre-test was administrated in the experimental class before giving the treatment of teaching listening comprehension through English songs to see the students' basic listening comprehension.

### 3. Administrating the Post-test

The result of the post-test was compared with the result of the pre-test to analyze the improvement of the students' listening comprehension through English songs.

### 4. Conducting the Interview

The interview was conducted to find out the problems the students face in learning macro skills of listening comprehension through English songs.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

After administrating both pre-test and post-test, the result of the pre-test was compared with the result of the post-test to analyze the improvement of the students' listening comprehension through English songs. The comparison of the pre-test and post-test showed that the students' listening comprehension was improved after being taught through English songs. The comparison between the total score of the pre-test and post-test was increased from 1608 to 1960. Besides that, it can be seen the mean of the students' scores in the pre-test and post-test was increased from 53.6 to 65.3

	Mean	N	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Pair 1 PretestScore	53.6000	30	12.05047	2.20010
PosttestScore	65.3333	30	12.75048	2.32791

Based on table above, it can be seen that the students' mean score of post-test was increased about 11.73 point after the treatment of teaching listening comprehension through English song was implemented. The highest score of the pre-test was 76 and the highest score of post-test was increased to 88, in which the highest score gain was 12. The lowest score of the pre-test was 32 and the lowest score of the post-test was 40, in which the lowest score gain was increased to 8.

In testing the hypothesis, *Repeated Measure t-test* was used and was also statistically tested by using statistical computerization (SPSS 17), in which the significance was determined by  $p < 0.05$ . The t-test revealed that the result was significant ( $p = 0.00$ ). Thus, there was a significant improvement of the students' listening comprehension through English songs. In other word,  $H_0$  was rejected and  $H_1$  was accepted.

Besides that, based on the result of the interview, the problems the students faced during the treatment of teaching listening comprehension through English songs could be divided into: 1) Problems from the listener: Students' low concentration, understanding the difficult words/phrases, sentence pattern and discourse marker, and unable to keep up with the singer's speed; 2) Problem from listening materials: some songs were long.

## **Discussion**

This section of article discusses the finding of the significant improvement of the students' listening comprehension through English songs and the finding of the

problems the students faced in learning macro skills of listening comprehension through English songs.

1. The Finding of the Significant Improvement of the Students' Listening Comprehension through English Songs.

No.	Macro Skill Types of Listening Comprehension	Pre-test Score (%)	Post-test Score (%)	The Increase (%)
1.	Identifying the main idea	72 (48%)	102 (68%)	30 (20%)
2.	Identifying specific information	159 (58.88%)	179 (66.29%)	20 (7.41%)
3.	Recognizing inference.	171 (51,81%)	215 (59.72%)	104 (7.91%)

Students' listening comprehension in recognizing main idea increased most significantly because songs can influence the listeners to be curious with its unstated message. That is why the song can make it a habit to the students to find the main idea of the song given when they were being taught listening comprehension through song. As Aphir (2002) states that as the profession of sales marketing, song writer, arranger, and singer should make their songs able to influence listeners' soul and feeling to be a drift and curious to know its meaning unconsciously. Besides, another reason in relation to this fact is that because songs have unstated value that leads the students to be accustomed to comprehending a song lyric generally rather than to translate each word individually. Song is poetic text that cannot be understood word by word. It is

also in relation with Weikart's statement (1988: 12) that song is a short poem or a sequence of verses which is composed with music and intended to sing.

Based on the theories above, it can be concluded that songs can not be translated word by word. It needs our comprehensibility to understand it. That is why, finding the main idea is important for us because it is a part of our comprehensibility in learning listening and understanding through songs. Songs lead people to find the main idea, because by listening to the lyrics over and over again, it makes them easy to find the main idea generally, every song has its own main idea in the ref part.

## 2. The Finding of the Problems the Students Faced in Learning Macro skills of Listening Comprehension through English Songs

Based on the result of interview, the problems that the students faced in learning macro skills of listening comprehension through English songs were found. In line with what had been observed during the treatment, the students faced the problems of enjoying the song. When they did not like song, they did not want to know about the meaning of the song. Additionally, when the singer sang too fast, it made them confused to catch what the singer sang

The researcher told the students that they have to try finding the main idea from every song, even when they did not like the song, because that is a part of learning listening comprehension through songs. Then the students still feel difficult to do it. The researcher asked them more focus.



According to Brown and Yule (1983) in Nunan (1997), there are four factors which can affect the difficulty of listening tasks, such as related to the speaker (how many there are, how quickly they speak and what types of accent they have), the listener (the role of the listener, whether a participant or not, or the individual interest in the subject), the content (grammar, vocabulary, information structure, background knowledge assumption, etc), support (whether there are pictures, diagrams or other visual aids to support the text).

The teacher found students' low concentration was another problem that happened in listening process, there was one student who could not concentrate. Besides, the teacher has got other problem; there was one student who got difficulties in sentence pattern and discourse marker. The third problem has appeared, that was from fifteen students, the researcher found there were thirteen students who got difficulties in comprehending the native speaker's said. The fourth problem came from limited vocabulary. There was one student who got that problem. Then the last problem was coming from the material. Based on the interview, the researcher has got one student who got this problem.

Considering on the result of the interview, it can be seen that there are 13 out of 15 students who gave the positive impressions when they were asked about their opinion after being taught through English songs while the students' score progressions increased significantly based on the gap between pre-test and post-test.

## CONCLUSIONS AND SUGGESTIONS

Based on the result and discussion of the research, the researcher can draw several conclusions:

1. There was significant improvement of the students' listening comprehension ability after being taught through English songs. It was proved by the increase of the students' mean score in the post-test which was higher than in the pre-test. Their post-test score increased from 53.6 to 65,3 in which the gain was 10,5 specifically, English songs improved the students' listening comprehension in all aspects of macro skill types of listening comprehension, such as identifying the main idea, identifying specific information and identifying inference. From those three macro skills in listening, identifying inference gained the highest increase based on the result of the research.
2. There were some problems the students faced in learning macro skills of listening comprehension through English songs which could be divided as follow:
  - a) Problems from the listener:
    - Students' low concentration
    - Understanding the difficult words/phrases.
    - Distinguishing sentence pattern and discourse marker.
    - Unable to keep up with the singer's speed.
  - b) Problem from listening materials: some songs were considered too long and difficult to be interpreted.

## **Suggestions**

Based on the problem faced by the research, it can be suggested that:

- a. Since low concentration was another problem that happened in listening process, the teacher should adjust the students to be more concentrated on the repetition of some words which actually was the signal of main points for comprehending the passage, and to be more concentrated on discourse marker, since discourse marker is considered as the bridge that leads to the topic.
- b. Based on the problems that, since the students' vocabulary was bad, the teacher should give the homework about translating some songs which they like.
- c. Some problems appeared when the song lyrics were not interested according to the students. Therefore if the teachers want to apply the songs in teaching listening, they should choose the songs whose lyrics are considered to be interesting to the students.
- d. Based on the problem from listeners that the students could not keep up with the singer's speed, it is suggested to the English teachers to give their students listening comprehension practice more frequently.
- e. Based on the result of the interview, English songs only gave the contribution in simple material or dialogue as in a song the content of the lyric is very

limited. Therefore, the students still felt difficult in comprehending a long passage. Thus, it is suggested to the other researchers to find another way to make the students able to comprehend a long passage.

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